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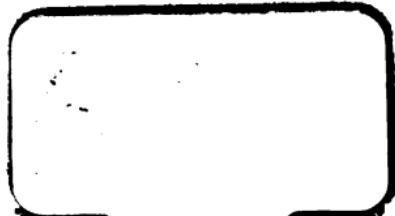
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# COINS OF THE ROMANS

RELATING TO

## B R I T A I N

DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED

BY JOHN YONGE AKERMAN, F. S. A.

CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF  
ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND.



Quis est quem non moveat tot clarissimis monumentis  
testata consignataque antiquitas.--CICERO.

Factum abiit—monumenta manent.—OVID. *Fast.*

LONDON:  
EFFINGHAM WILSON, JUNIOR,  
XVI, KING WILLIAM ST., LONDON BRIDGE.

M.DCCC.XXXVI.



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TO  
JOHN LEE, ESQUIRE,  
L.L.D., F.R.S., F.S.A.,  
F.R.A.S.

OF HARTWELL HOUSE, IN THE COUNTY  
OF BUCKINGHAM.

SIR,

IN soliciting your countenance to this  
little work, I cannot refrain from gratifying my  
own feelings, even at a risk of doing violence  
to yours, by publicly acknowledging the obli-  
gations I owe to you, for the uniform readiness

and urbanity with which you have, at all times, met my enquiries on the interesting subject to which it relates.

During your travels in the East, you had abundant evidence, from the most authentic sources, of the extent of that mighty empire, of the medallic memorials of whose sway over Britain, I here present a brief but I trust faithful account.

In the earnest hope, that my endeavours may assist in promoting that study, the advancement of which you have so much at heart,

I remain, Sir, with great respect,

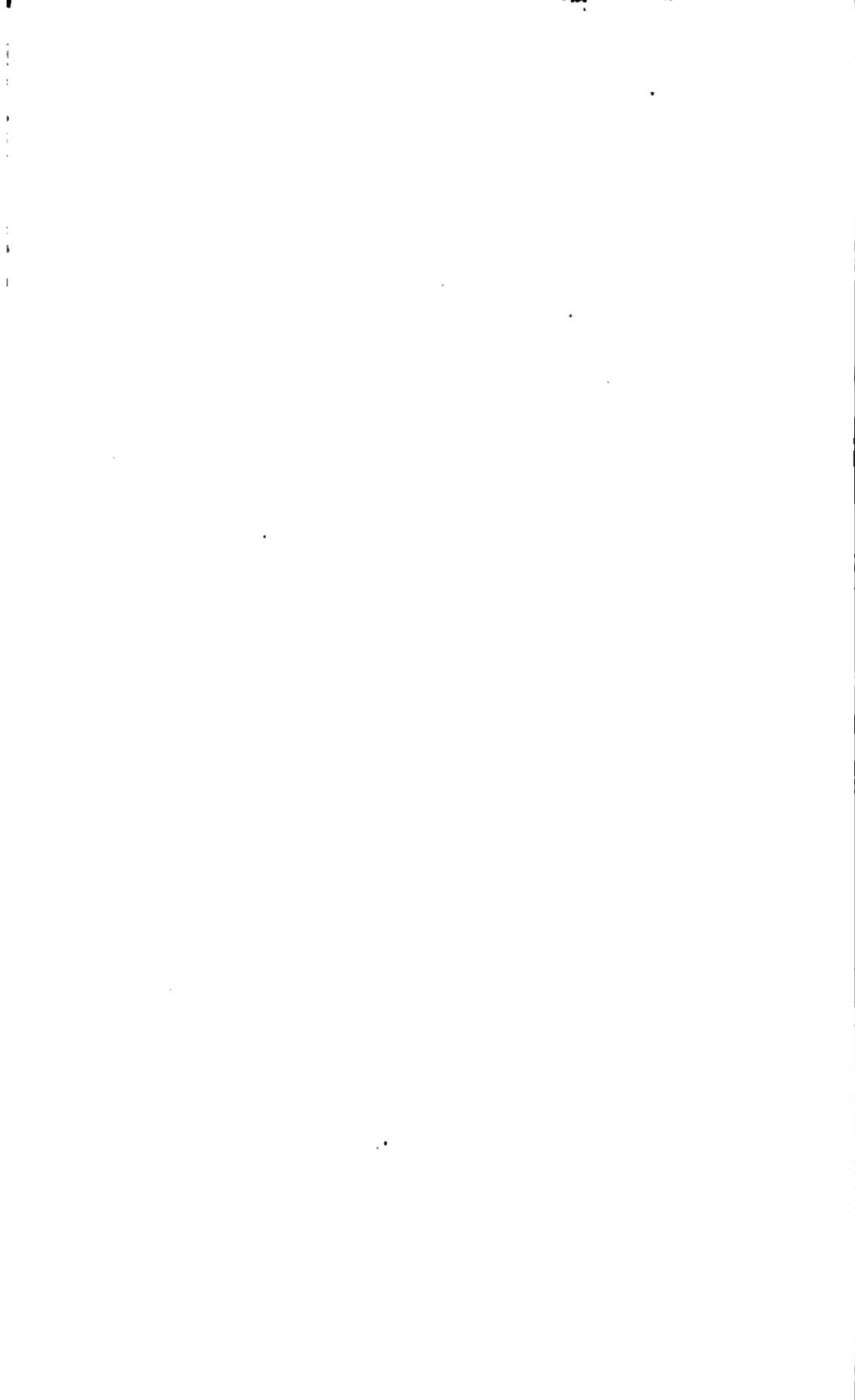
Your faithful humble Servant,

JOHN YONGE AKERMAN.

PECKHAM,  
NOVEMBER, M.DCCC.XXXV.

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## PREFACE.

THE object of this little work, is to bring under one view the coins of the Romans which relate to the province of Britain. It is hoped that such an attempt will not only find favour with the antiquary and the numismatist, but will also interest all who are curious in the early history of our island; some of the principal events in which, during a long period of the Roman occupation, are recorded on the coins of the conquerors.

The remark of Gibbon, that “diligence and accuracy are the only merits which an historical writer may ascribe to himself,” is still more applicable to compilations of this description: there is little room for fancy or

ornament; but the authentic information which they supply, affords ample amends for any deficiency of style, and supplies the place of elaborate embellishment.

I must add, that the notes for this tract were made during brief intervals of leisure, and that I have taken great pains to exclude such coins as are of questionable authenticity. To those who may complain of its brevity, I have only to remark, that I might have made it much larger if I had dealt in conjecture; but, as I preferred matter of fact to wild speculation, and rejected the fanciful relations of the over-zealous for the indisputable evidence of antiquity, I could not have increased its size without travelling beyond the limits I had prescribed to myself.

## INTRODUCTION.

IN the following pages I have endeavoured to describe a series of ancient coins, which to an Englishman must, of all others, be the most interesting. The plates have been engraved, with the most strict attention to accuracy, from drawings made expressly for this work from the well preserved originals in the British Museum, from the collection of the French king, and various private cabinets in this country. Some of these coins have been figured in Camden, Speed, and other writers on the early history of Britain, but all so unlike the originals as to cause much embarrassment to the inexperienced collector; even Pinkerton, ever ready to pounce upon the errors of others, contented himself with copying ill-engraved and unauthenticated representations. The plates, therefore, which accompany this volume claim the attention of the numismatist on the score of their fidelity.

I have confined myself to a description of those coins only which have direct allusion to Britain.

It is evident that others were struck by the Romans to commemorate events in this country; but, in order to save much repetition, I have given descriptions of those only which bear the word BRITANNIA either at length, or in a contracted form, and such as are considered by many to have been minted in this country.

The coins of the Romans have descended to us in prodigious numbers. In every country once included in their vast empire, numerous hoards in the three metals, have, from time to time, been brought to light. In England, France, Italy, Germany, and the more remote provinces of the East, innumerable discoveries during the last two centuries have enriched the cabinets of the curious, and proved a source of information and delight to the historian, the antiquary, and the artist.

With a foresight which has seldom been evinced by modern nations, the Romans celebrated those deeds which have been the admiration of succeeding ages, in a manner peculiarly their own. Time and accident might destroy temples and statues, upon which the genius and skill of the architect and the sculptor had been lavished, but their coins were calculated to perpetuate their fame to the remotest times. The triumphal arch, defaced and overthrown, exhibits but disjointed portions of its once high-sounding inscription; but numerous coins re-

main uninjured, bearing the sententious legends—IVDAEA · CAPTA — VICTORIAE · BRITTANNICAE — AEGYPTO · CAPTA — and a multitude of others of almost equal interest. “If all our historians were lost to us,” says Gibbon, “medals and inscriptions would alone record the travels of Hadrian.” The coins of the Romans were, in fact, their gazettes, which were published in the most distant provinces; and they are at this day discovered in remote regions where our own records have, in all probability, never reached. Did they obtain a victory or reduce a province, coins were issued in vast numbers, upon which the vanquished were depicted with their characteristic arms and costume. Did the emperor visit the province as pacifier, coins appeared, upon which he was represented in a civil habit, raising up the prostrate female who represents the country which had won the imperial favour. The remission of taxes, the raising of temples to their deities, and public buildings for the people, the forming of public ways, the celebration of games and sacrifices, and the records of traditions when Rome herself was young, are all found in infinite variety on the coins of that once mighty empire.

Such were the types which the Romans impressed upon their coins—“the common drudge of retail traffic.” Of their execution as works of art,

enough has been already said by various writers, and we know that they have been the admiration of the most eminent sculptors of modern times.

My observations, with one or two exceptions, are confined to the coins themselves. A history of Roman Britain could not have been comprised within the limits of a work like the present ; indeed, the early records of most countries present a finer field for the imagination of the poet than the sober relation of the historian : yet, replete with fable and romance as is the early history of Britain, it is some consolation to the antiquary to find a few authentic relics which bear upon the early times of our ancestors. From the first landing of Julius Cæsar to the final abandonment of the island by the Romans, the history of Britain presents, with few intervals, one long scene of cruelty and extortion. Barbarian retaliation frequently followed civilized aggression, and war and slaughter were often preferred by the wretched islanders to the grinding taxation of their oppressors. Of the manner in which the taxes of the Romans were laid upon conquered countries, we have many relations : even their own poet, Juvenal, has lashed them for the cruel exactions practised upon those states which had the misfortune to become tributary to them. Wretched indeed must have been the condition of the Britons when the Romans quitted for ever their

island province; debased by long servitude, and tainted by the vices of their civilized oppressors, they were an easy prey to the barbarian hordes who threatened to overwhelm them: and of the dark period which succeeded we have but faint records, unrelieved by inscriptions or medallic evidence.



Nec stetit Oceano, remisque ingressa profundum,  
Vincendos alio quiescivit in orbe Britannos.  
Haec est in gremium victos que sola recepit,  
Humanumque genus communi nomine fovit ;  
Matri, non dominæ ritu, civesque vocavit  
Quos domuit nexuque pio longinqua revinxit.

CLAUDIAN. PANEG. 3. in *Stiliconem*.

## ROMAN BRITISH COINS.

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### CLAUDIUS.

[A.D. 41 to A.D. 54.]

THE first Roman coin having allusion to Britain was struck in the fifth year of this emperor's reign. A fugitive British lord, having fled to the Roman court, entertained the emperor with an account of the island, and assured him that its complete subjugation might easily be effected. Claudio*s*, it appears, lent a ready ear to the traitor ; and when the British ambassadors entreated that he might be given up to them, Claudio*s* treated their request with disdain, and kept the fugitive in his favour. This treatment was, of course, resented. Excuses were not wanting for a quarrel with the Britons ; and it was now discovered that their tribute had not been regularly paid. Mutual recrimination fol-

lowed ; and finally Plautius, the Roman general, was despatched with an army into Britain, and Claudius prepared to follow him. After a succession of skirmishes; in which the Romans, though often great sufferers, were generally the victors, the Britons sustained a signal defeat.

Claudius about this time landed in person, and the Britons were again defeated with great slaughter\*. It is said that the war was ended in fifteen days, and that Claudius shewed great clemency to the vanquished Britons, who paid him divine honours. Plautius in reward for his services obtained the government of Britain, and after the departure of the emperor, carried on the war against the provinces not yet tributary to the Roman arms.

\* Suetonius, however, says that the revolt was quelled without bloodshed ;—“ *Ac sine ullo praelio aut sanguine, intra paucissimos dies parte insulae in deditioinem recepta :*” an account which agrees with an inscription in the Barberini palace at Rome :—

TI · CLAVDIO · CAES  
AVGVSTO  
PONTIFICI · MAX · TR · P · IX  
COS · V · IMP · XVI · P · P  
SENATVS · POPVL · Q · R · QVOD  
REGES · BRITANNIAE · ABSQ  
VLA · IACTVRA · DOMVERIT  
GENTESQVE · BARBARAS  
PRIMVS · INDICIO · SVBEGERIT.

Dion Cassius, on the contrary, says that it cost the Romans a hard-fought battle.

*Obverse.* TI · CLAVD · CAESAR · AVG · P · M · TR · P ·  
VIII · IMP · XVI. *Tiberius Claudius Caesar*  
*Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribunitia Po-*  
*testate nonum, Imperator decimum sextum.*  
Laureated head of Claudius to the right.

*Reverse.* DE · BRITANN (or BRITAN), on the front of  
a triumphal arch, surmounted by an equestrian  
statue between two trophies. *Plate I. No. 1.*

I cannot do better than quote the words of Dr. Cardwell in illustration of this coin. "It is evident," he observes, "from the date given to the *Trib. pot.* that this coin was not minted before the middle of the year 46 after Christ, although we know from Dio that a triumph for his victories in Britain had been decreed by the senate three years previously, and had actually been celebrated in the year 44. The coins, however, which bear our inscription are in gold and silver, and were therefore minted by the emperor\*; they were minted, too, as appears from the reverse, in commemoration of the triumphal arch erected by the senate†, and therefore could not be well issued till some time had elapsed after his return from Britain. It is worthy of remark, that although Claudius was partial to the title of *Imperator*, and even on some of his

\* The coinage of brass money was evidently under the controul of the senate, while that of gold and silver was at the command of the emperor.

† Dio, lib. 2.

coins is styled IMP. XXVII, he uses it in no instance as a *prænomen*, confirming thereby the words of Suetonius, who says expressly, ‘*Prænomine imperatoris abstinuit* \*,’ but at the same time leading to the permanent abuse of the title as a token of victory, by the frequency and absurdity of the occasions on which he adopted it †.”

This coin is by no means uncommon in gold, but is of considerable rarity in silver.

I have next to notice a remarkable and unique silver medallion formerly in the *Museum Hederarum*, a collection now dispersed.

*Obverse.* TI · CLAVD · CAESAR · AVG · GERM · P · M · TR · P. *Tiberius Claudius Cæsar Augustus Germanicus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribunitia Potestate.*  
Laureated head of Claudius to the left.

*Reverse.* DE · BRITANNIS. The emperor in a quadriga; his right hand resting on its edge; his left holding a sceptre surmounted by an eagle.

The catalogue states that it was obtained through Mr. Millingen, whose antiquarian knowledge and skill in medallic science forbid us to doubt the authenticity of this interesting medallion. It is described as “in *aversa repercussus*.”

\* Cap. 12.

† When the title IMPerator *precedes* the name on coins, it has a different signification, and implies supreme power; but when it follows the name, it is simply a military title.

## BRITANNICUS.

[BORN A. D. 42.—POISONED A. D. 55.]

THE original name of this son of Claudius was Germanicus; but he received that of *Britannicus* in consequence of the victories obtained by Claudius in Britain, and is better known in history by the latter name. Through the intrigues of Agrippina, his step-mother, he was removed from the succession to the empire to make room for her son Nero, by whom he was poisoned, A.D. 55. The coin here engraved is described by Eckhel, and considered by him unique.

*Obverse.* TI · CLAVDIVS · CAESAR · AVG · F · BRITANNICVS. *Tiberius Claudius Cæsar, Augusti Filii, Britannicus.* Bare head of Britannicus to the right.

*Reverse.* S · C. *Senatus Consulto.* Mars marching to the right with spear and shield.



Alabanda, Thessalonica, Nicomedia, Ilium, and other Greek cities, struck coins in honour of this unfortunate prince; but as they belong to a distinct series, they are not here described. I cannot, however, pass over two coins in the cabinet of Mr. Thomas, who justly holds them in high estimation. The first is of gold.

## I.

*Obverse.* *No legend.* The laureated head of Claudius to the right.

*Reverse.* Bare head of Britannicus to the right: behind it, the letters BA · KO in monogram. These letters are the abbreviation for ΒΑσιλέος ΚΟτυος [money] of King Cotys. Beneath the head, the Greek numeral letters BMT, which signify 342 of the era of the kingdom of Bosphorus, answering to the year of Rome 798, or A. D. 46, and thus agreeing with the gold coin of Claudius. *Plate VI. No. I.*

The other coin is of copper.

## II.

*Obverse.* The head of Cotys, king of the Bosphorus, encircled by the regal diadem or fillet, and the hair reaching to the shoulders. Behind, the monogram, composed of the letters BA · KO, as in the preceding coin. These princes are always thus represented on their coins.

*Reverse.* KAΙCAPOΣ · BPETANNIKΟ. *Cæsaris Britannici.* Bare head of Britannicus to the right. *Plate VI. No. 2.*

Both these coins are of great rarity. The first is, perhaps, the only one in this country; the other is, in all probability, unique, and is now published for the first time.

Few cabinets in England possess coins of this rare series; and it is on this account, as well as from the interest attached to them owing to the circumstance of their illustrating each other, that they are here admitted. "It may not be amiss to remind the reader," remarks Mr. Thomas, in the observations with which he accompanied the drawings he so kindly permitted me to make of these interesting objects, "that, until the time of Domitian, the portraits of the kings of the Cimmerian Bosphorus (a country now known as the Crimea), are seldom, if ever, found upon their gold coins\*: that on one side the head of the contemporary Roman emperor is generally found in lieu of it, and on the other, that of the Cæsar or nearest relative of the emperor. Even the names of the kings of the Bosphorus are not given at length, but in a monogram or contracted form: the date, however, always found upon them, indicates the year in which they were minted."

\* M. Mionnet, in his excellent "*Description de Médaillles Antiques*" (tom. ii. p. 369), describes one of the portraits upon each of the coins numbered 54 to 58, as of Rhescuporis the First, king of the Bosphorus; but Visconti, in his "*Iconographie Grecque*" (tom. ii. p. 153), supposes them to be portraits of Romans, and does not admit them in that work because they do not belong to the series of *Greek* portraits.

“The celebrated Visconti,” continues Mr. Thomas, “was the first, who, upon an inspection of the identical gold coin here described\*, pronounced the juvenile portrait which it bears to be that of Britannicus†; an opinion which was sanctioned by the date, which shews that the piece was struck while Messalina, the mother of that prince, yet lived, and was in the plenitude of her power and influence. It would appear, that it was not until after the death of that empress, when the crafty Agrippina had become the wife of the imbecile Claudius, and advanced her son (by her first marriage), that Cotys caused the portrait of Nero to be engraved on his gold coins.”

Since the publication of Visconti’s valuable “*Iconographie Grecque*,” the copper coin described above, has been discovered; and, while it proves beyond doubt, that the youthful portraits are of the same personage, confirms the opinion which that able antiquary had ventured upon the gold one. The value and interest of this coin are greatly increased on account of its being the only one bearing a portrait of Cotys the First.

\* This coin was formerly in the collection of M. Allier.

† *Iconographie Grecque*, tom. ii. p.158. 4to. edit. 1811.

## HADRIANUS.

[A.D. 117 TO A.D. 138.]

IN the reign of this prince the Britons revolted ; and Julius Severus was recalled to proceed against the Jews, who had made an effort to recover their liberty. The Caledonians also destroyed several forts which had been erected by Agricola\*. Hadrian, with three legions, arrived in time to prevent the Britons from throwing off the Roman yoke, and to protect the northern frontiers of the province, built a wall which extended from the Tyne in Northumberland to the Eden in Cumberland. The war does not appear to have been of long continuance ; and the southern Britons, protected from the incursions of their savage neighbours, were evidently content to bear the Roman yoke. Hadrian's arrival in Britain is commemorated by a large brass coin struck in the year of Rome 874, A.D. 121.

*Obverse.* HADRIANVS · AVG · COS · III · P · P. *Hadrianus Augustus, Consul tertium, Pater Patriæ.*  
Laureated bust of Hadrianus, with the chlamys buckled over the right shoulder.

*Reverse.* ADVENTVS · AVG · BRITANNIAE. *Adventus Augusti Britanniæ.* In the exergue, S. C. An

\* The Roman general had previously had some skirmishing with the northern inhabitants ; but his presence was considered of more importance in the East.

altar with the fire kindled placed between the emperor in the toga, who holds a patera, and a female figure, a victim lying at her feet. *Plate I. No. 5.*

There is another very rare coin in large brass.

*Obverse.* HADRIANVS · AVG · COS · III. *Hadrianus Augustus, Consul tertium.* Laureated head of Hadrianus to the right.

*Reverse.* BRITANNIA. A female figure seated, her right foot resting on a rock, her head resting on her right hand, and spear in her left; by her side a large shield, with a spike in the centre. *Plate I. No. 4.*

Most antiquaries believe the figure on the reverse of this coin to be the province of Britain personified. It cannot be Rome; and the absence of characteristic attributes of the island, is in all probability owing to the ignorance of the engraver of the die, which was doubtless not executed in Britain.

Second or middle brass coins of Hadrian also bear allusion to Britain: of these there are two varieties.

### I.

*Obverse.* HADRIANVS · AVG · COS · III. *Hadrianus Augustus, Consul tertium.* Laureated head of the emperor.

*Reverse.* BRITANNIA. A female figure seated on a rock,

holding a javelin, her right hand supporting her head; a large shield by her side, with a long spike in the centre. *Plate I. No. 2.*

The attitude of repose given to the figure on the reverse of this coin, the type of which resembles that of the large brass, would seem to imply that it was struck when peace had been restored in Britain.

## II.

*Obverse.* HADRIANVS · AVGVSTVS · COS · III. *Hadrianus Augustus, Consul tertium.* Laureated head of the emperor.

*Reverse.* PONT · MAX · TR · POT · COS · III · P · P. *Pontifex maximus, Tribunitia Potestate, Consul tertium, Pater Patriæ;* in the exergue, BRITANNIA. A female figure as on the preceding coin. *Plate I. No. 3.*

Havercamp thinks these figures are intended to represent the secure, but watchful state of the province. The attitude of repose signifies that the Britons have no longer cause to dread the incursions of their barbarian neighbours; while the spear and shield indicate that the province is prepared to repel any attack.

Coins of Hadrianus with the legends EXERCITVS · BRITANNICVS and RESTITVTORI · BRITANNIAE

have been given by early writers, but they are not authenticated\*.

An eminent numismatist informs me that he never saw one in any of the cabinets he has inspected either at home or abroad. Nevertheless, it is not impossible that such coins were struck.

No gold or silver coin of Hadrian, with allusion to Britain, is known; a deficiency for which it is difficult to account, as the coins of that prince, in gold and silver, are exceedingly numerous.

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### ANTONINUS PIUS.

[A. D. 138 TO A. D. 161.]

THE coins of this emperor have been found in great numbers in England; and one bearing "*Bri-tannia*," has now and then been discovered among them; but there are several varieties of this interesting type, some of which are of great rarity.

The first is a gold coin or aureus.

*Obverse.* Uncertain. (See *Vaillant*.)

*Reverse.* BRITAN. Victory standing on a globe holding a garland and a palm-branch, an elegant type repeated on a coin of large brass, described below.

\* A coin of large brass is described in the Museum Theupolum, with the legend EXERC · BRITAN. The emperor on a suggestum or estrade haranguing his soldiers.

This coin, in all probability, commemorates the victory over the revolted Brigantes, who made incursions upon their neighbours, then leagued with the Romans. Urbicus, the Roman general, defeated them with great slaughter, and raised a turf wall still further to the northward, extending, as our English antiquaries suppose, from the Tyne to Carlisle.

Victory was an important deity among the Greeks and Romans; and she is accordingly figured on great numbers of their coins. The representation of this goddess cannot be mistaken; her attitude is generally graceful, and on this coin is elegant. Sylla built a temple to Victory at Rome, and instituted games in her honour; and we are told, that Hiero, king of Sicily, made a present to the Romans of a statue of Victory in solid gold. She had a fine statue in the Capitol, of which the figure on the reverse of the coin here described, may have been a copy. Rome is constantly represented on the coins of the lower empire, seated in a chair, and holding the *hasta* and a small figure of Victory, whom the early Christians seemed disposed to reverence after the gods of their fore-fathers had disappeared, since her statues were protected long after those of the other deities had been demolished.

The next are of *large brass*; and of these there

are several varieties. The reverse of the first is similar to the gold coin above-described.

## I.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · P · P · TR · P · COS · III. *Antoninus Augustus Pius, Pater Patriæ, Tribunitia Potestate, Consul tertium.* The bearded and laureated head of Antoninus.

*Reverse.* IMPERATOR · II (*Imperator iterum*) : across the field of the coin, BRITAN. An elegant winged Victory standing on a globe, holding a garland in her right hand, and a palm branch in her left. *Plate II. No. 2.*

I never heard of a discovery of a coin with this type in England. One of them at the sale of Mr. Edgar's cabinet, in 1815, brought the very high price of £5 7s. 6d; but it was in remarkably fine preservation.

## II.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · P · P · TR · P · COS · III. *Antoninus Augustus Pius, Pater Patriæ, Tribunitia Potestate, Consul tertium.* Laureated head of the emperor.

*Reverse.* BRITANNIA. A female figure seated on a rock, her head bound with a fillet or diadem, and wearing trousers under her robes. A standard in her hand, and a spear in her left, which rests on the edge of a shield placed by her side. *Plate I. No. 7.*

## III.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · P · P · TR · P .... *Antoninus Augustus Pius, Pater Patriæ, Tribunitia Potestate.* Laureated head of the emperor to the right.

*Reverse.* IMPERATOR · II (*Imperator iterum*) and BRITAN across the field. A helmed female figure seated on a rock holding a spear in her right hand; her left reposing on a large ornamented shield by her side, her right foot resting on a globe. From this it may be inferred that the figure is intended for Rome. *Plate III. No. 2.*

## IV.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · P · P · TR · P · COS · III. *Antoninus Augustus Pius, Pater Patriæ, Tribunitia Potestate, Consul tertium.* Laureated head of the emperor to the right.

*Reverse.* BRITANNIA. A male figure seated on a perpendicular rock, holding a standard in his right hand and a javelin in his left; by his side a large oval shield with a spike in the centre, resting on a helmet placed on the ground. *Plate II. No. 1.*

## V.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · P · P · TR · P · COS · III. Laureated head of Antoninus to the right.

*Reverse.* IMPERATOR · II (*Imperator iterum*): in the exergue (BRI)TAN. A male figure with laureated head seated on a rock; in his right hand a standard, in his left a spear; his left arm reposing on the edge of a large spiked shield by his side.

## VI.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · P · P · TR · P · COS · III. Laureated head to the right.

*Reverse.* IMPERATOR · II (*Imperator iterum*): in the exergue, BRITAN. A female figure seated on a globe surrounded by waves; in her right hand a

standard, in her left a javelin; her elbow resting upon the edge of a large buckler by her side.  
*Plate II. No. 5.*

This is perhaps the most interesting coin of the whole series. The type illustrates the oft-quoted line of Virgil:—

“Et penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos.”

Or that of Claudian:—

“——— et nostro deducta Britannia mundo.”

#### VII.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · P · P · TR · P · COS ·  
 III. Laureated head of the emperor to the right.

*Reverse.* IMPERATOR · II (*Imperator iterum*): in the exergue, BRITANNIA. A male figure seated on a rock; in his right hand a standard, in his left a spear; his left arm resting on the edge of a large ornamented oval shield, supported by a helmet.

#### VIII.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · P · P · TR · P · COS ·  
 III. Laureated head to the right.

*Reverse.* BRITANNIA. A male figure seated on a rock; his right hand holding a standard; his left arm reposing on the edge of a shield placed by his side. *Plate II. No. 4.*

This curious coin is somewhat puzzling. It bears on the obverse the head and name of Antoninus; but the seated figure on the reverse is obviously a portrait of *Hadrian*. It is difficult to find a reason for this, unless we suppose that the

die for the reverse was originally intended for a coin of Hadrian during the life of that emperor, but for some cause or other not used on his money. Or was it designed by the senate as a tribute to the memory of Hadrian, who certainly performed more in Britain than his successor? In either case, it is a very curious type. That the figure on the reverse is that of Hadrian, no one acquainted with the portraits of that emperor will deny.

There are also two coins in middle brass.

I.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · P · P · TR · P · COS ·  
III. Laureated head of the emperor to the right.

*Reverse.* IMPERATOR · II. Victory walking to the left,  
holding in her right hand a buckler inscribed  
BRITAN. *Plate I. No. 6.*

This type would seem to indicate, that a decisive victory had been obtained by the Romans over the Brigantes. The type of the next coin is a contrast to this. It was minted in the fourth consulate of Antoninus, and probably denotes that the campaign was then ended.

II.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG · P · P · TR · P · COS ·  
III. Laureated\* head of the emperor to the right.

\* A coin in the cabinet of Mr. Thomas has the head *radiated*; this is very uncommon, if not unique.

*Reverse. BRITANNIA · COS · IIII. Britannia, Consul quartum.* A female figure seated on a rock in an attitude of dejection ; before her, a large oval shield, and a military standard. *Plate I. No. 8.*

Of all the Roman coins relating to Britain, this is the most frequently discovered in England. Some time since, one of them was dug up in St. Saviour's churchyard, near London Bridge. They are generally found in very ordinary condition, and are scarcely ever met with in fine preservation. It is somewhat singular that among the numerous fine and interesting brass medallions of Antoninus not one bears allusion to Britain.

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### COMMODUS.

[A. D. 180 to A. D. 192.]

IN the reign of this emperor, the Caledonians again passed the boundary wall, ravaged the country, and put to the sword the Roman troops. The incursion was sudden and unexpected, and the Roman general was taken by surprise. Commodus, on receiving the news of this irruption, despatched Ulpius Marcellus into Britain ; when the invaders were driven back beyond the wall, and the Roman discipline, which had been suffered to decay, was revived by Marcellus. We learn from Herodian that Com-

modus was ambitious of the name of *Britannicus*, although he did not visit the province; and this is shewn by his coins, upon which it frequently appears with other equally inappropriate and unmerited titles\*. During the reign of Commodus, Pertinax, Clodius Albinus, and Julius Severus were, at various times, governors of Britain.

Among the numerous beautiful medallions of this emperor, are three with records of the war in Britain. They are of large size, and two of them differ but slightly from each other.

*Obverse.* M · COMMODVS · ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · BRIT. *Marcus Commodus Antoninus Augustus Pius, Britannicus.* Laureated head of the emperor to the right.

*Reverse.* BRITTANIA · P · M · TR · P · X · IMP · VII · COS · IIII · P · P. *Brittania, Pontifex Maximus, Tribunitia Potestate decem, Imperator septimum, Consul quartum, Pater Patriæ.* A male figure seated on a rock to the right, holding in his right hand a military standard, and in his left a javelin; by his side a shield inscribed S · P · Q · R (*Senatus Populusque Romanus.*)

This medallion, which is of great rarity, is in the collection of the French king; it differs from that

\* Lampridius indulges in some severe remarks upon the assumption of the names *Britannicus* and *Pius*, by Commodus.

in the cabinet of Mr. Thomas, by having the letters S · P · Q · R, instead of a spike, in the centre of the shield.\*

Another most interesting medallion in the possession of Mr. Thomas is of great rarity.

*Obverse. M · COMMODVS · ANTONINVS · AVG · PIVS · BRIT. Marcus Commodus Antoninus Augustus Pius Britannicus.*

*Reverse. P · M · TR · P · X · IMP · VII · · · · ·* the remainder of the legend not being impressed, in consequence of the module of the medallion being too small†. Victory seated on a heap of arms, inscribing on a shield VICT · BRIT (*Victoria Britannica*) in two lines: before her a trophy.

Captain Smyth, in his recent work on the large brass coins of the emperors, is of opinion that the coin of Commodus, which follows, was minted before the campaign was ended, because Victory holds a shield without inscription. If the conjecture be admitted, this medallion was struck at a subsequent period, when the war had terminated; but the IMP · VII. is against it. Had the medallion been struck by a decree of the conscript fathers, they would not

\* That in the French cabinet is also without the numerals VII.

† The continuation of this legend when entire, is, COS · IIII · P · P, or, COS · IIII · P · P · V · C · P.



MEDALLION OF COMMODUS



have dared to omit the record of another victory: on the other hand, if the striking of these pieces had been at the disposal of the tyrant, he who assumed the title of *Conqueror of a Thousand Gladiators*, would not have neglected to style himself *Imperator* for the *eighth* time.

A coin in large brass is by no means uncommon, although, from its interest, it is not always to be obtained so easily as scarcer coins of this emperor.

*Obverse.* M · COMMODVS · ANTON · AVG · PIVS · BRIT.

*Marcus Commodus Antoninus Augustus Pius, Britannicus.* Laureated head of the emperor to the right, with the hair, beard, and moustaches dressed.

*Reverse.* P · M · TR · P · X · IMP · VII · COS · IIII · P · P: in the exergue, VICT · BRIT (*Victoria Britannica*). Victory seated on a heap of shields to the right, holding in her right hand a palm-branch, and supporting with her left arm a shield, which she rests on her knees. *Plate III. No. 5.*

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## SEVERUS.

[A. D. 193 to A. D. 211.]

THE sojourn and death of Severus in Britain render it necessary that we should say something of his extraordinary career, and of the motives which

induced him to visit this country. The great military fame of this emperor was tarnished, if not obscured, by his ferocity and cruelty; but if we look only at his military expeditions, his sagacity, promptitude, and judgment, we shall find that circumstances alone were wanting to render him as celebrated as the most famous heroes of antiquity. Possessed of the purple, which he had acquired by a series of exploits which may justly be paralleled with those of Cæsar and Hannibal, Severus discovered that the cares of government were as arduous as the toils of a campaign; and he who had braved danger in many a hard-fought battle, found the throne of a usurper beset with perils no less imminent. Naturally mistrustful, his jealousies and alarms were increased by the discovery of a conspiracy against him by his most tried and intimate friends: while the increasing dissensions of his sons, Caracalla and Geta, added greatly to his inquietude, and made sad havoc upon a constitution already impaired by a life of hardship and the advances of old age.

It has been well observed by Gibbon, that “the ascent to greatness, however steep and dangerous, may entertain an active spirit with the consciousness and exercise of its own powers; but the possession of a throne could never yet afford a lasting satis-

faction to an ambitious mind.\*" Severus was doomed to experience this bitter truth: "*Omnia fui, et nihil expedit!*!" was the dying exclamation of this daring and successful despot, of whom scarcely one single act of mercy or forbearance is recorded†.

Bodily infirmity and mental anxiety had made inroads upon the naturally robust and vigorous constitution of Severus, so much so, indeed, that the gout had deprived him of the use of his feet; but, even in this state, the news of the revolt of the Britons was welcome to the crippled emperor: his mind found relief in activity, and he had long been desirous of weaning his sons from the luxury and effeminacy of Roman life. Herodian says that the governor of Britain wrote to Severus, informing him of the rebellion, and entreating him either to send reinforcements, or come immediately in person to reduce the revolted islanders. The emperor, upon receipt of this intelligence, caused proclama-

\* See Lord Bacon's essay, "*Of Empire*," where this restlessness of ambitious princes is discussed with his usual sagacity.

† Eutropius (lib. viii. c. 19), tells us that Severus was attached to the arts of peace, and loved literature and philosophy. This *ipse dixit* of the historian is, however, refuted by the public acts of Severus. Of his partiality to literary men we have no record; and his restless and ferocious disposition was utterly incompatible with philosophical studies.

tion to be made of his intended expedition, and having soon collected a formidable army, he commenced the march with his usual rapidity, and soon arrived in Britain. His unexpected appearance, with such a force, astonished and alarmed the revolted Britons, who immediately sent ambassadors to negotiate a peace and make terms with the exasperated tyrant; but his wrath could only be quenched in their blood. Nevertheless, he affected to temporise; and having, by keeping the ambassadors in suspense for some days, gained sufficient time to mature his plans, he dismissed them with an assurance that he would take ample vengeance. Herodian says he was ambitious of the title of Britannicus, and of crowning his victories in other countries by erecting trophies in Britain. This author informs us that the campaign was a hard one, even for a general like Severus: he also gives us some curious particulars of our savage ancestors and of their island. The country, he observes, was in many places overflowed by the sea; and the bogs and marshes presented great difficulties to the operations of the Roman army. The natives were scarcely acquainted with the use of clothes, and were consequently prepared for swimming or wading through the mud and water, when desirous of retreating before their enemies.\* He speaks of their

\* Dion Cassius says that their manners were most simple, that they had neither walls nor towns, nor cultivated

painted bodies, of which he says they were very vain, and characterizes them as a warlike and sanguinary race. Their arms, he says, were a narrow shield, a lance, and a bow. Defensive armour they had none ; they looked upon helmet and coat of mail as impediments to their passage through the swamps and morasses\*.

Leaving Geta to the government of that portion of the island which remained in the Roman interest, Severus and his son Antoninus, or, as he is most commonly called, Caracalla, advanced against the enemy, whom they overthrew in several engagements ; not, however, without suffering severely : but ere the war was ended, the growing infirmities of Severus compelled him to quit the field, leaving Caracalla to carry on the contest. Retiring to York, and finding his end approaching, the emperor had his dying moments embittered by the detection of his son's design against his life ; for it is said that this appalling discovery reached the stern and relentless soul of Severus, and that it hastened his death, which took place in that city, in the year

lands ; that they lived upon wild fruits, and by hunting ; and that, although the sea abounded with fish, they never eat any.

\* Herodian tells us that these morasses continually emitted thick vapours, which obscured the face of heaven : his informant must have visited the island at a foggy season. As I write, there is not a cloud in the sky.

of Rome 964 (A. D. 211). In his last moments he recommended unity to his sons, and, with characteristic ferocity, urged his generals to prosecute the war against the Caledonians until they were exterminated\*.

I now come to describe such of the coins of Severus as have relation to the country in which he ended his eventful life. I commence with one in large brass, which is generally considered by numismatists to have reference to some advantages obtained by the Romans over the Picts.

*Obverse. L · SEPT · SEVERVS · PIVS · AVG. Lucius Septimius Severus Pius Augustus.* Laureated head of the emperor to the right.

*Reverse. P · M · TR · P · XVIII · COS · P · P. Pontifex maximus, Tribunitia Potestate decimum octavum, Consul, Pater Patriæ.* The emperor in a military dress, attended by two soldiers, each bearing a standard, standing between his two sons: a captive on the ground.

This coin, by the record of tribunitian power, was struck A. D. 210. The advantages which it boasts, are, however, very doubtful, as the expedi-

\* Dion Cassius says it was foretold that Severus would not return alive from Britain; a prophecy which was doubtless founded upon the knowledge of Caracalla's design upon his life.

tion is said to have cost the Romans fifty thousand men.

The next is also of large brass, and appears to commemorate an important victory.

*Obverse.* L · SEPT · SEVERVS · PIVS · AVG. *Lucius Septimius Severus Pius Augustus.* The laureated and bearded head of Severus, to the right. All his coins represent him with a beard, which he wore, says Dio, out of respect to the memory of Aurelius and Pertinax.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITTANICAE. Two winged Victories attaching a circular buckler to a palm tree, at the foot of which two captives are seated.

*Plate III. No. 7.*

Some numismatists think that a double victory is implied by the two figures holding the shield; but they may possibly be intended to indicate that the glory was shared between Severus and his son. The same type is repeated on another coin of Severus, but it has the legend VICT · BRIT · P · M · TR · P · XIX · COS · III · P · P.

The middle or second brass coins of Severus with allusion to Britain are the following:—

I.

*Obverse.* SEVERVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. *Severus Pius Augustus Britannicus.* Laureated head of the emperor to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITTANICAE. Victory stand-

ing between two captives seated on the ground, holding with both hands a standard transversely.  
*Plate IV. No. 1.*

## II.

*Obverse.* SEVERVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. *Severus Pius Augustus Britannicus.* Laureated head of the emperor to the right.

*Reverse.* VICT · BRIT · P · M · TR · P · XIX · COS · III · P · P. *Victoriæ Britannicæ, Pontifex Maximus, Tribunitia Potestate decimum nonum, Consul tertium, Pater Patriæ.* A similar type to that on the reverse of the preceding coin. *Plate IV. No. 2.*

The following types occur in gold and silver :—

## I.

*Obverse.* SEVERVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head of Severus to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. *Victoriæ Britannicæ.* Victory standing to the left, holding in her right hand a garland, and in her left a palm-branch.  
*Plate III. No. 6.*

## II.

*Obverse.* SEVERVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head of Severus to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. Victory holding a captive.

The next are found only in silver :—

## I.

*Obverse.* SEVERVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. Victory attaching a buckler to the trunk of a tree.

## II.

*Obverse.* SEVERVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. Victory seated on a shield, holding in her right hand another shield, resting on her knees, and in her left a palm-branch.  
*Plate III. No. 4.*

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## CARACALLA.

[A. D. 198 TO A. D. 217.]

CARACALLA, upon the death of his father, concluded a disadvantageous and inglorious peace with the Caledonians, and restored to them many of their forts. He soon quitted the island, and commenced a series of cruelties worthy of the son of Severus. He put to death all the physicians who had refused to attempt the life of his father, and included in the horrible proscription those who had been charged with his own and his brother's education, because they had dared to propose a reconciliation between them. The tried ministers of his father shared the same fate; and in the following year, the discord of the brothers ended in the death of Geta, who was slain by Caracalla in the arms of his mother. An-

other massacre followed of the friends of Geta, and even the buffoons and gladiators who had contributed to the amusement of that unfortunate prince were involved in the common fate\*. The career of Caracalla, the most active, if not the most cruel of all the Roman tyrants, was marked by rapine, violence, and slaughter ; and he finally fell by the hand of Macrinus, in the year of Rome 970 (A.D. 217).

We have several coins of this prince relating to Britain. I commence with the large brass.

I.

*Obverse. M·AVREL·ANTONINVS·PIVS·AVG. Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Pius Augustus. Laureated head of Caracalla to the right.*

*Reverse. VICT·BRIT·TR·P·XIII·COS·III. Victoriae Britannicae, Tribunitia Potestate decimum quartum, Consul tertium. Victory, her left foot on a helmet, erecting a trophy, near which stands a captive ; another captive bound, and seated on the ground. Plate IV. No. 3.*

Those who are familiar with Roman coins will recollect the peculiar shape of the *German* shield which appears on the coins of Domitianus. Two shields of the same shape are represented in the trophy on this coin ; but it is difficult to determine if they were copied from actual specimens. Hero-

\* Herodianus, lib. iv. c. 11.

dian says, the Britons carried a *narrow shield* (*scutus angustus*), and these are certainly of that shape.

## II.

*Obverse.* M · AVREL · ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG. Laureated head of Caracalla to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITANNICAE. A type similar to that on the preceding coin. *Plate IV.* No. 4.

## III.

*Obverse.* M · AVREL · ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG. Laureated head of Caracalla to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITANNICAE. Two Victories attaching a buckler to a palm-tree, at the foot of which two captives are seated.

The same type occurs on a coin of Severus (see page 38).

The middle brass coins of Caracalla with allusions to Britain are the following :—

## I.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head of Caracalla to the right.

*Reverse.* VICT · BRIT · TR · P · XIII · COS · III. *Victoriae Britannicæ, Tribunitia Potestate decimum quartum, Consul tertium.* Victory inscribing a buckler attached to a palm-tree; her left foot resting on a helmet. *Plate V.* No. 1.

## II.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head of Caracalla to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITANICAE. A similar type to that of the preceding coin. *Plate V. No. 2.*

A middle brass coin of Caracalla, in the cabinet of Mr. Huxtable, has the *radiated* head of Caracalla, with the legend ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG. The *reverse* is the same as the above.

His gold coins are:—

I.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Head of Caracalla laureated.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. Victory marching, bearing a trophy in one hand, and holding a captive with the other.

II.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Head of Caracalla laureated.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. Victory seated on a heap of arms.

His silver coins:—

I.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head of Caracalla to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. *Victoria Britannicae.* Victory running to the right, holding a standard transversely with both hands. *Plate IV. No. 6.*

II.

*Obverse.* ANTONINVS · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head of Caracalla.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. Victory marching with garland and palm-branch.

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## GETA.

[A. D. 209, to A. D. 212.]

THE fate of this unfortunate prince has been mentioned in the foregoing section. Although, as we are informed, he did not take a personal share in the expedition against the Caledonians, the senate appear to have considered him entitled to the surname of Britannicus, and struck coins in his honour. Of these there are several varieties. The large brass are :—

### I.

*Obverse.* IMP · CAES · P · SEPT · GETA · PIVS · AVG. *Imperator Cæsar Publius Septimius Geta Pius Augustus.* Laureated head of Geta to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITTANNICAE. Victory seated on a heap of arms, inscribing a shield, which she rests on her knees. *Plate IV. No. 5.*

### II.

*Obverse.* IMP · CAES · SEPT · GETA · PIVS · AVG. Laureated head of Geta.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITTANNICAE. Two Victories suspending a circular buckler from the trunk of a palm-tree, at the foot of which two captives are seated.

A similar type occurs without the two captives.

## III.

*Obverse.* P · SEPTIMIVS · GETA · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. *Publius Septimius Geta Pius Augustus Britannicus.*  
Laureated head of Geta.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITTANNICAE. Victory, her left foot placed on a helmet, erecting a trophy, at the foot of which is a captive standing, and another seated on the ground; each has his hands tied behind his back.

## IV.

*Obverse.* P · SEPTIMIVS · GETA · PIVS · AVG · BRIT.  
Laureated head of Geta.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITTANNICAE. Victory erecting a trophy, at the foot of which a captive is seated.

A similar type occurs with the legend VICT · BRIT · P · M · TR · P · II · COS · II.

## V.

*Obverse.* P · SEPTIMIVS · GETA · PIVS · AVG · BRIT.  
Laureated head of Geta.

*Reverse.* VICT · BRIT · TR · P · III · COS · II. *Victoriae Brittannicae, Tribunitia Potestate tertium, Consul iterum.* A type similar to No. I.

This coin was struck in the year that Severus died, and probably records the last successful encounter with the Britons of the north.

Other coins of Geta bear the legends VICTORIAE · AVGVSTORVM — VICTORIAE · AETERNAE · AVGG (*Augustorum*), which may probably have allusion

to events in Britain. On the first of these, Caracalla in a military dress, and Geta in the toga, stand, supporting between them a globe\*, while Victory holds a garland above their heads. A bound captive sits at their feet. Another coin has Victory driving a biga, with VICTORIAE · AVGG.

Second brass:—

I.

*Obverse.* P · SEPTIMIVS · GETA · PIVS · AVG · BRIT.  
*Publius Septimius Geta Pius Augustus Britannicus.*  
 Laureated bearded head of Geta to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRITTANNICAE. Victory seated on shields, holding a palm-branch and a shield, which she rests on her knees. *Vignette on Title-page.*

II.

*Obverse.* P · SEPTIMIVS · GETA · PIVS · AVG · BRIT.  
 Laureated and bearded head of Geta.

*Reverse.* VICT · BRIT · TR · P · III · COS · II. *Victoriae Britannicæ, Tribunitia Potestate tertium, Consul iterum.* Victory inscribing a buckler attached to a palm-tree, her left foot resting on a helmet.

\* This type would seem to allude to the milder duties of Geta in Britain, while his father and brother were absent on the northern expedition. An unique coin of Geta, in large brass, with the emperor on horseback, preceded by a soldier carrying a standard, legend, ADVENTVS · A · · · ·, was purchased by Captain Smyth at the sale of Mr. Willatt's cabinet. This type evidently alludes to the return of Geta from Britain.

## Gold and silver:—

## I.

*Obverse.* P · SEPT · GETA · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head of Geta to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. *Victoriæ Brittannicæ.* Victory standing to the left, holding in her right hand a garland, and in her left a palm-branch.  
*Plate IV. No. 7.*

This type occurs in silver, and also in gold, if we may credit Mediobarba.

## II.

*Obverse.* P · SEPT · GETA · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head of Geta to the right.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. Victory marching and bearing a trophy.

## III.

*Obverse.* P · SEPT · GETA · PIVS · AVG · BRIT. Laureated head of Geta.

*Reverse.* VICTORIAE · BRIT. Victory standing holding a branch and the hasta.

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ROMAN COINS SUPPOSED TO BE THE WORK  
OF FORGERS.

FROM the time of Geta and Caracalla down to the reign of Diocletianus, no Roman coins bear allusion to Britain; and it is very doubtful whether any were minted in the province. I except the

numerous base denarii, cast in clay moulds made from coins of the time of Severus, which have been discovered at various times in England, and of which I have spoken elsewhere\*. I have already endeavoured to shew, that it is extremely doubtful whether these cast coins were an authorised currency struck in times of emergency, or whether, as has been supposed by some, they are the work of Roman forgers†. The numismatist will not require to be told, that the thickness of ancient coins did not admit of the modern test of ringing, and that great numbers of ancient plated coins are still in existence as evidence of the skill of Roman forgers. When, however, the authorised Roman denarii were debased, another plan appears to have been adopted by the forger, who then resorted to *casting*. A few years since, some extensive Roman remains were excavated at Castor, in Northamptonshire, (the *Durobrivæ* of Antoninus), when, among other curious relics, many moulds and apparatus for casting coins were discovered. These remains have been engraved and described in a work published at the time of the discovery.

\* The reader is referred to the article prefixed to my "*Descriptive Catalogue of Rare and Unedited Roman Coins*," for several particulars relative to this base money.

† These coins *might* have been cast by command of Severus, as *pièces de nécessité*, for the pay of his troops; yet Dion Cassius expressly tells us that he acquired great wealth by his expedition in Britain.

These implements shew the manner in which this casting was performed, and account for the strange reverses so often found on coins of this period, which at one time sorely puzzled numismatists. It is not unusual to find a denarius of Julia Domna with the record of the tribunitian power on the reverse, which properly belongs to the reverse of Caracalla. The reason of these blunders may be thus explained. The moulds, being impressed on both sides, were often packed up to receive the fused metal without any order or arrangement, and a reverse of Caracalla or Severus might frequently be placed next to the head of Domna, and consequently produce one of those strange pieces, of which the erudite Frölich, in his "*Quatuor Tentamina*," has given us many examples.

It would appear, that, in the reign of Constantine, casting was sometimes resorted to as a cheap and expeditious method of mintage. I am led to this conclusion, from having seen at the British Museum a quantity of clay moulds, shaped exactly like those of the time of Severus. They bear the impress of the very common types of the Constantine family.

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## CARAUSIUS.

[A. D. 287, to A. D. 293.]

DOCTOR STUKELY, in his history of Carausius, says that this usurper was a British prince and a native of Saint David's. But he has no authority for such a pedigree; and the Menapia in which Carausius was in all probability born, was a city of Batavia, not of Wales. Although the Roman historians differ in their accounts of his rank, they yet seem agreed as to the obscurity of his origin. One styles him a citizen of Menapia; another says he was of the meanest extraction; while a third describes him at once as a foundling; a sufficient proof that his birth was not noble, as Doctor Stukely would have us believe.

A digression on the utility of medallic studies would be out of place in a work like the present; but I cannot pass over in silence one circumstance relative to the coins of Carausius. His name is scarcely ever spelled rightly by historians, while on his coins we not only find the name by which he is commonly known, but also those of *Marcus*, *Aurelius*, and *Valerius*. Genebrier has a list of the names which have been given to him by various writers; and it must be confessed that they are a ludicrous variety. They are as follow:—Caratius,

Karentius, Carentius, Caurasius, Coravissius, Carrassius, Carassus, and Crausius. Victor calls him Corausius; and Zonarus gives him the name of Crassus, and says he reigned but three years in Britain.

In the year 287, the Emperor Maximianus had just suppressed the revolt of the peasants in Gaul, when he received information of the usurpation of Carausius, who had sailed over to Britain with the Roman fleet, and assumed, with the purple, the title of Augustus. Carausius had long been celebrated as a skilful pilot and a valiant soldier; and his merit had obtained for him the command of the Roman fleet stationed at Boulogne to check the daring ravages of the German pirates. It is said that, notwithstanding the admiral's skill in naval affairs, he was unfitted for this important trust, and that he suffered the pirates to proceed upon their expeditions, and pounced upon them as they returned laden with spoil; a charge which is almost corroborated by the fact that he was possessed of great wealth at the time of his usurpation, with which he bribed the forces under his command. Arrived in Britain, he defied the vengeance of the emperors, and succeeded in ingratiating himself with the inhabitants, and the Roman troops stationed in the island. The wealth of Carausius was, it is said, reported to the emperors, who, judging, from that circumstance,

that he was unworthy of the trust they had reposed in him, had taken measures for his apprehension and punishment. The usurper received intelligence of his danger, and immediately made a bold and successful effort to save himself. A very remarkable and unique coin, formerly in the possession of the late Mr. Douce, seems to allude to this escape: it bore on the reverse, a female figure grasping in each hand a serpent, with the legend VITAVI (*I have escaped!*). I was anxious to obtain a drawing of this coin from that gentleman, who kindly communicated to me several unpublished types of Carausius; and was mortified to find that it had been either lost or mislaid. It is, however, accurately described in my catalogue, where I have ventured to give the following explanation of its very curious type.\*

“ This most extraordinary type is believed to be “ the only one of the kind in the Roman series, “ and the coin itself is probably unique. The singularity of the device encourages an attempt at an explanation of its meaning. The female figure “ would appear to be the good genius of Carausius, “ and she grasps in each hand the enemies of her “ protégé, the emperor Diocletian and his colleague,

\* Mr. Douce, a few weeks before his death, informed me that he had made diligent search for this coin, but without success, and that it had probably been stolen, with other things, when he removed to his residence in Gower Street.

“ represented as serpents. May we not, therefore, “ suppose that this very curious coin was struck by “ Carausius immediately upon his arrival in Britain, “ before the recognition of his title by the empe- “ rors? It seems to confirm the account of the “ historians, who inform us that the rebel admiral, “ previous to his carrying off the Roman fleet, had “ received intelligence of some meditated punish- “ ment from the emperors.”

“ Time and chance ” favoured the usurpation of Carausius: he arrived among the Britons, when their discontent had rendered them ripe for rebellion. Tacitus informs us, that in his time they groaned under the yoke of the Romans: they complained that instead of having one master, as formerly, they had then two; one was the governor, who exercised his cruelty upon their persons, and revelled in their blood; the other was the procurator, who seized upon and confiscated their property. They suffered from the same evils under Diocletianus and Maximianus, and therefore welcomed the arrival of Carausius. The fleet which the usurper had carried off from Boulogne, had deprived the emperors of the means of pursuit, and when, at length, after great labour and expense, a new armament was prepared, the imperial troops were an easy conquest to the experienced sailors of Carausius, on an element to which they were not

accustomed. The rebel admiral was secure in his island retreat; and the emperors, finding that they could not punish their faithless servant, reluctantly accorded to him the title of Augustus. I say 'reluctantly,' for it is impossible that the assent of the emperors could be cordial, when it was wrung from them by necessity. But there is another circumstance which amounts almost to a proof that the treaty was never formally ratified. Coins of Carausius with PAX · AVGGG — LAETITIA · AVGGG — MONETA · AVGGG — PROVID · AVGGG and SALVS · AVGGG (the three G's denoting three emperors), exist in considerable numbers, but those of Diocletianus and Maximianus, with the same indications, are of very unfrequent occurrence; a circumstance which seems to have escaped the notice of the discriminating and sagacious Eckhel. Now, the usurper would naturally publish the recognition of his title on his numerous coins; but we are without proof that the few coins of Diocletianus and Maximianus with AVGGG were issued by their command; on the contrary, there appear to be some grounds for supposing that they were minted by order of Carausius, for they bear in the exergue the same letters as are found on the coins of that usurper, namely, MLXXI; and are, besides, so like in fabric to those of Carausius, that we are warranted in believing them to have been minted by his order.

Carausius enjoyed his honours seven years, and, during that period, performed many acts which evinced his ability to rule, notwithstanding his defection from his masters. He defended the frontiers of his empire from the Caledonians, courted the friendship and alliance of the Franks, upon the confines of whose country he was born, and, in reward for their services, instructed them in military and naval affairs. His fleets swept the seas, and, commanding the mouths of the Rhine and the Seine, ravaged the coasts, and rendered the name of the once obscure Menapian pilot as celebrated as those of the emperors. During this time, Carausius still kept possession of Boulogne; but, in the year 292, the adoption of the two Cæsars, Constantius and Galerius, added strength to the Roman arms. Maximianus guarded the Rhine, and Constantius, taking command of the legions appointed for the British war, immediately laid seige to Boulogne, which, after an obstinate resistance, surrendered to the conqueror, who possessed himself of the naval stores of Carausius. Constantius then turned his arms against the Franks, and thus deprived the usurper of the assistance of that warlike people. Three years were consumed in the preparation of a fleet for the recovery of Britain; but ere it was launched, news arrived of the assassination of Carausius by his friend and prime minister, Allectus.

The event was considered as a presage of victory to the Roman arms.

I have now to speak of the coins struck by Carausius during his reign in Britain. In my *Descriptive Catalogue*, I have enumerated five varieties in gold, fifty in silver, and upwards of two hundred and twenty in small brass, besides a medallion in silver, with the legend PAX · AVG. The gold coins of this usurper resemble those of Diocletianus and his colleague, being of a fine and bold, but peculiar, style of workmanship. The silver is of inferior fabric, and often of very base quality. Many of them have illegible legends, and probably were the work of ignorant moneyers, if not of forgers. Numbers of the small brass are also of very barbarous execution; but all of them bear a portrait which it is impossible to confound with any other in the Roman series.

I.

*Obverse.* IMP · CARAVSIVS · P · F · AV. *Imperator Carausius Pius Felix Augustus.* Laureated bust of Carausius to the right, with the paludamentum.

*Reverse.* EXPECTATE · VENI. *Await! I come!* The emperor bare-headed, holding the hasta, and joining hands with a female figure, who holds a trident: in the exergue, RSR.



This very rare coin, which is of silver and in unusually good condition, is in the splendid collection of Mr. Thomas. The same type also occurs in gold. It is difficult to assign an exact meaning to the letters RSR; but if conjecture be allowed, it seems highly probable that this coin was struck at Rutupia (Richborough in Kent). The type is singular and interesting, and seems to imply that Carausius had sounded the Britons before he ran off with the fleet from Boulogne. Genebrier, describing, probably, from an ill-preserved coin, takes the female figure for Felicity, and supposes the trident to be the long caduceus with which she is generally represented; but that it is a trident which she holds is quite evident, and that the figure is the genius of Britain will be acknowledged even by the unimaginative.

Another coin in *silver* in the choice collection of Mr. Brumell, of whose practised eye, and sound

judgment I have often availed myself, is highly interesting.

## II.

*Obverse.* IMP·CARAVSIVS·P·F·AV. *Imperator Carausius Pius Felix Augustus.* Laureated bust with the paludamentum to the left.

*Reverse.* ADVENTVS·AVG. *Adventus Augusti.* The emperor on horseback, his right hand elevated, his left holding the hasta: before, a captive seated on the ground. In the exergue, a thunderbolt.

Other coins with a similar type, have, in the place of the thunderbolt, the letters M·L, which are generally supposed to signify *Moneta Londinensis*.

This is a common type on Roman coins. It celebrates the arrival of an emperor; and the coin here described, was doubtless struck upon occasion of the usurper's landing in Britain, unless the seated captive be considered as implying a return from some victory on the northern frontiers of Britain. Be this as it may, the dress and attitude of Carausius denote that his advent is a friendly one. His right hand is raised and open, as if held out in amity and peace: "*Dextra vetat pugnas,*" says Statius. A brass coin of this emperor has the legend ADVENTVS·CARAVSI, with the type of the emperor on horseback.

## III.

*Obverse.* IMP · CARAVSIVS · P · F · IN · AVG. *Imperator Carausius Pius Felix Invictus Augustus.* Bust of Carausius to the right with the spiked crown.

*Reverse.* MONET(A) · AVGGG (*Moneta Augustorum*) ; Moneta standing with her attributes : in the field, S · P ; in the exergue, C. *Plate V. No. 3.*

This rare coin of small brass is in the British Museum ; it is remarkable on account of the title of *Invictus*. The title of Moneta was given to Juno, from *monere*, to admonish ; the sacred geese kept in the temple of that goddess, having alarmed the Romans when the Gauls attempted to surprise the capitol by night. A temple was subsequently erected, in which the silver of the commonwealth was deposited, and this place was eventually used as the public mint.

Captain Smyth, in his excellent work on Roman medals, quaintly remarks, that "gold has been worshipped through all ages without hypocrisy." The respect which Carausius seems here to record for Moneta, must have been equally sincere, since it was to his wealth that he owed the success of his rebellion. The three G's on this coin denote the triple sovereignty. I leave it to the speculative to assign a meaning to the letters in the field and exergue, to decide whether the C stands for Camulodunum or Caerleon.

## IV.

*Obverse.* CARAVSIVS · P · F · AVG. *Carausius Pius Felix Augustus.* Laureated and armed bust of Carausius to the right.

*Reverse.* CONSERVAT · AVG (*Conservator Augusti*): Jupiter standing, holding a thunderbolt in his right hand, and the *hasta* in his left; at his feet an eagle: in the exergue M · L (*Moneta Londinensis*).

This coin is of gold, and in very fine preservation. It was bequeathed to the British Museum, by the late Mr. Cracherode, who bought it for £150. It is totally different in fabric to the silver and brass coins of Carausius; the relief is very bold, and the style of the portrait seems to have been closely copied from those of Diocletianus and Maximianus.

## V.

*Obverse.* CARAVSIVS · P · F · AVG. Laureated and armed bust of Carausius.

*Reverse.* CONSERVATORI · AVGGG (*Conservatori Augustorum*): Hercules standing with his usual attributes: in the exergue, M · L (*Moneta Londinensis*).

This coin, preserved in the Hunter collection, is also of gold, and of extreme rarity. Mionnet describes one with the addition of a quiver in the field. Hercules was the favourite deity of the emperor Maximianus, who assumed the surname of *Hercules*.

## VI.

*Obverse.* IMP · CARAVSIVS · P · F · AVG. Laureated head of Carausius to the right.

*Reverse.* LEG · IIII · FL. *Legio Quarta Flavia.* A Centaur walking to the left, holding, with both hands, a long club or pedum, which he rests on his shoulders: in the exergue, C.



This coin is of silver, and in the collection of Mr. Brumell. The reverse shews that the fourth legion was attached to the usurper, who places their badge and name on his coins as an honourable distinction, as some of the Roman emperors had done before him.\* The fourth legion, it would appear from this type, took, for their cognizance, that monster of heathen fable which the Greek epigrammatist describes as—

“ A horse without head--a man without feet ! ”

\* See the innumerable small brass of Gallienus, on which the badges of the various legions are displayed, and the coins of the earlier emperors, which boast of the fidelity of the Praetorian soldiers.

and was originally raised by Vespasian for Syria, as we learn from Dion Cassius, who says — “Οὐεσπασιανὸς τὸ τε δευτερον τὸ επικερικὸν τὸ ἐν Παννονίᾳ τῇ κάτω, καὶ τὸ τεταρτον τὸ Φλαυιειον, τὸ ἐν Σύρᾳ.” A denarius of Septimius Severus bears the legend LEG · IIII · FL. The type above described occurs also in brass, and the services of other legions which accompanied Carausius, are recorded on his numerous coins.

## VII.

*Obverse.* IMP · C · CARAVSIVS · P · F · AVG. Bust of Carausius to the right, with spiked crown and the paludamentum.

*Reverse.* GENIVS · EXERCIT. *Genius Exercitus.* Genius standing to the left; in his right hand a patera, on his left arm a cornucopia: in the field S · P: in the exergue, C.

This unique brass coin also shews that the usurper was anxious to testify his gratitude to the army which had enabled him to attain the sovereignty of Britain.

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### ALLECTUS.

[A.D. 293 TO A.D. 296.]

ALLECTUS succeeded to a tottering throne, and his days were numbered. The shores of the continent were covered with troops, and Constantius had arranged them in such a manner that Allectus was left in doubt as to the place of his meditated landing. The usurper beheld the vast preparations with alarm and terror, but resolved to maintain, by force of arms, the power he had acquired by the basest treachery. The principal squadron, destined to make a descent upon the island, rendezvoused in the mouth of the Seine; and, under the command of the Praefect Asclepiodotus, set sail for Britain on a stormy day, and with a side wind, an adventure which the panegyrists of the time lauded as something new in the annals of Roman warfare. Fortune seemed to favour the expedition, which, under

cover of a dense fog, eluded the fleet of Allectus, stationed off the Isle of Wight, and landed on the western coast. The *præfect* immediately burned his gallies ; and, as the expedition was favoured by fortune, he obtained great praise for this bold act. Allectus had taken his station near London, in anticipation of the attack of Constantius who commanded the fleet at Boulogne, when the news reached him of the landing of Asclepiodotus. The usurper, with rash impetuosity, hastened to meet the enemy. His troops, wearied by forced marches, encountered those of Asclepiodotus with every possible disadvantage. The result was fatal to Allectus ; his army was defeated with great slaughter, and he himself perished in the conflict.

The coins of Allectus are of gold and silver, and brass, of the small size. They bear a well-executed bust with a marked character, which may be considered an accurate portrait of the usurper. The reverses are, for the most part, similar to those on the coins of Carausius. The most common is that with a galley filled with rowers, and the legends LAETITIA · AVG, and VIRTVS · AVG, the latter legend being most frequent. A ship was the favourite type for a state among the Romans, and Horace uses it in his ode "*Ad Rempublicam.*" The LAETITIA is an empty compliment to the self-created emperor whose vessel soon foundered. When the VIRTVS

accompanies this type, it would appear to denote that Allectus felt conscious of the advantage he possessed, in the fleet which guarded the shores of his island.

## I.

*Obverse. IMP· ALLECTVS · P· F· AVG. Imperator Allectus Pius Felix Augustus.*

*Reverse. ADVENTVS · AVG. Adventus Augusti. Allectus on horseback, his right hand raised, his left holding the hasta: before, a captive seated on the ground: in the exergue, S·P·C.*

This coin, in the collection of the British Museum, is, perhaps, unique.

A gold coin of this usurper, in the cabinet of Mr. Brumell, is also unique. It was purchased by that gentleman at a public sale in London. This coin was, I believe, discovered at, or near, Reading, and came into the possession of a collector shortly after.

## II.

*Obverse. IMP· C· ALLECTVS · P· F\*· AVG. Imperator Cæsar Allectus Pius Felix Augustus. Laureated head of Allectus to the right.*

*Reverse. PAX · AVG. Pax Augusti. Peace standing to the right, her right hand holding aloft an olive*

\* This coin is figured in Plate II of my *Descriptive Catalogue*; but the engraver has, by mistake, given P·P for P·F.

branch, her left the hasta pura, transversely: in the exergue, M · L (*Moneta Londinensis*).

Mr. Brumell possesses another coin in silver, which differs slightly from any that has been hitherto published. It has the same type and legend as the foregoing, but bears the letters S · P in the field, and C in the exergue. I obtained, a short time since, a small brass coin of Allectus with this type and one of Marius, both of which were found in the Thames by the workmen employed in removing the foundation of old London Bridge.

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## CONSTANTINUS.

[A. D. 311, to A. D. 337.]

FROM the period of the defeat and death of Allectus, to the time of the first Constantine, no Roman coins appear to have been struck in Britain, if we except those of Maximianus, which have M · L · XXI in the exergue, letters and numerals, found on the coins of Carausius; but under Constantine, coins were minted with the letters P · LON. in the exergue. These letters are by most antiquaries supposed to signify *Pecunia Londinensis*; and this conjecture is supported by the existence of many coins of Constantine and his sons, with

letters and numerals indicating other places of mintage, such as Sirmium, Treves, Lugdunum, Arles, Siscia, Aquileia, Rome, and Alexandria. Many of them, supposed to have been struck at Lugdunum, have merely the letter L to indicate the place of mintage: they are found in immense numbers on the Continent; and on that account are not assigned to the London mint, while those with P · LON are of rather unusual occurrence, and are, without doubt, the produce of the British Colony, being more frequently discovered in England, than in other countries once forming part of the Roman dominions.\* It is somewhat singular that no gold or silver coins of Constantine and his sons bear the letters of the London mint. All the coins of these princes having P · LON in the exergue, are of small brass, and, as I believe, confined to particular types, which are here described.

## I.

*Obverse.* CONSTANTINVS · AVG. *Constantinus Augustus.* Helmed bust of Constantinus with coat of mail.

*Reverse.* BEATA · TRANQVILLITAS.† A quadrangular

\* Jobert, desirous of giving these coins to Lugdunum (Lyons) reads the P · LON "Percussa Lugduni in officina nona;" but Bimard assigns them to the London mint. "Science des Médailles," tom. ii. p. 104. edit. 1739.

† This legend is very frequently blundered or contracted: thus—TRANQLITAS.—TRANQVILITAS, and sometimes RANQLITAS.

altar supporting a globe, over which are three stars: on the front of the altar, VOTIS · XX: in the exergue, P · LON.

This type is extremely common, with other letters, in the exergue.\* These coins must have been minted in prodigious numbers in many parts of the empire, and were evidently issued in commemoration of that profound tranquillity which then reigned throughout the Roman dominions. Father Harduin has been ridiculed for seeing, in the three stars, a symbolic compliment to the three emperors; but it is certainly a more rational conjecture than many others in which that antiquary indulged. Pindar† tells us, that Tranquillity was the daughter of Justice, who caused towns to flourish and become great; and Claudian, in his panegyric, calls Antoninus Pius "*Tranquillum Pium*," and contrasts him with the war-loving Severus. Coins of the younger Constantine have the same reverse, with a galeated, laureated, or crowned bust on the obverse, as have also the coins of Crispus. (*Plate V. No. 6.*)

## II.

*Obverse.* CONSTANTINVS · AVG. Laureated bust of Constantinus.

\* It should be mentioned that the coins of this period, in all the metals, very frequently have letters in the field, the signification of which is extremely doubtful.

† Pyth. lib. viii.

*Reverse.* SARMATIA · DEVICTA. Victory with a trophy in her right hand, and a palm-branch in her left, trampling on a captive seated on the ground before her: in the exergue, P · LON and a crescent.  
*Plate V. No.5.*

This type is also of very frequent occurrence with other letters in the exergue. It commemo- rates the victory obtained by Constantine over the Sauromatæ who dwelt near the Palus Mæotis. The emperor having heard that these people had passed the Ister in boats, and pillaged his territories, immediately marched against them. The Sauro- matæ were led by their king, Rausimodus. Zosimus tells us that the barbarians attacked a town, the walls of which were topped with wood only, which they fired and then assaulted on all sides: but the besieged made a brave resistance; and in the height of the combat Constantine arrived, and victory de- cided in favour of the Roman army. Many were slain, and great numbers were made prisoners. Rausimodus saved the remainder of his army by flight, and, crossing the Ister, entered the Roman dominions: but the victor was at his heels, and again gave battle to him in a thick wood on the summit of a hill. The Romans were once more victorious, the king of the Sauromatæ was left on the field, and great numbers of his followers were made captives.\*

\* Zosimus, lib.ii.

## III.

*Obverse.* CONSTANTINVS · P · F · AVG. *Constantinus Pius Felix Augustus.* Laureated bust of Constantinus with coat of mail.

*Reverse.* SOLI · INVICTO · COMITI. The sun wearing the pallium, standing; his right hand elevated, his left holding a globe: in the exergue, M · LON (*Moneta Londinensis*).

The same type is extremely common with other letters in the exergue; and the first two of these three reverses, with the same letters in the exergue, occurs on the coins of Crispus and the younger Constantinus. The coin here described, must have been struck previously to the year of Rome 1064 (A.D. 311), when Constantine "embraced Christianity\*." The deity on the reverse was a favourite one with his heathen predecessors.

## IV.

*Obverse.* CONSTANTINVS · AVG. *Constantinus Augustus.* Helmed bust of Constantinus to the right.

\* I trust to be forgiven for copying the words of the historian, in speaking of Constantine's abandonment of the gods of his forefathers. To suppose, however, that he "embraced Christianity," is an insult to its meek founder. He ascended the throne, reeking with the slaughter of friends whom his ambition had converted into enemies; and he quitted for ever the "eternal city" after the murders of his wife and son, with the odious appellative of "a second Nero." Great as were the abilities of Constantine, it required not the prejudice of Zosimus to render his name hateful to humanity.

*Reverse.* VIRTVS · EXERCIT. *Virtus Exercitum.* Two captives, their hands bound behind their backs, seated on the ground; between them a labarum inscribed VOT · XX: in the exergue, P · LON.  
*Plate V.* No. 3.

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## FAUSTA.

[A. D. 307 to A. D. 326.]

THE coins of this empress, the daughter of Maximianus Hercules, and wife of Constantine the Great, are common in small brass, except those which bear the letters P · LON in the exergue, which are of considerable rarity. The following coin is in the cabinet of Mr. Brumell.

*Obverse.* FLAV · MAX · FAVSTA · AVG. *Flavia Maxima Fausta Augusta.* Bust of the empress to the right.

*Reverse.* SALVS · REIPVBLICAE. *Safety of the Republic.* A woman standing holding a child on each arm: in the exergue, P · LON.

This type, though doubtless intended as a compliment to the empress, is not of very easy interpretation. Do the two children represent the princes to whom Fausta had given birth, or are they typical of the Roman people? The numismatist will remember the coins of Julia Domna, on which she

is styled "*Mater Senatus*," and "*Mater Castrorum*," and the denarii of Plautilla which bear the proud boast "*Propago Imperi*."

Fausta was married to Constantine in the year 307, and by his order suffocated in a warm bath A.D. 326. Some assert that she was not guilty of the crime for which she suffered.

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## CRISPUS.

[A.D. 317 TO A.D. 326.]

THE coins of this prince, struck, as is generally supposed, in the London mint, are as follow:—

### I.

*Obverse.* FL · IVL · CRISPVS · NOB · CAES. *Flavius Julius Crispus Nobilissimus Cæsar.* Laureated bust of Crispus with the paludamentum.

*Reverse.* PROVIDENTIA · CAESS. *Providentia Cæsarum.* The gate of a camp; above, a star: in the exergue, P · LON (*Pecunia Londinensis*).

The same type is found on the coins of the younger Constantine.

### II.

*Obverse.* IVL · CRISPVS · NOB · C. *Julius Crispus Nobilissimus Cæsar.* Laureated head of Crispus.

*Reverse.* VOT · X (*Votis decem*), within a garland, around which are the words CAESARVM · NOSTRO-RVM: in the exergue. P · LON (*Pecunia Londinensis*), and a crescent.

## CONSTANTINUS THE YOUNGER.

[A.D. 317, TO A.D. 340.]

THE coins of this prince resemble those of his father and brother; but many of them bear a portrait by no means resembling that of the elder Constantine. The reader will scarcely require to be reminded that this prince was the legitimate son of Constantine, by his wife Fausta, and that Crispus was also his son, but by a concubine named Minervina. Crispus was put to death by command of his father, upon a charge of having attempted the chastity of the empress Fausta, who was subsequently detected in an amour with a slave. The portraits on the coins of this prince, are invariably like those of his father; but those of the younger Constantine have frequently a totally different character, a fact for which I am unable to account.

The types of the coins of this prince, with the initials of the London mint, resemble, in every respect, those of his brother Crispus, and need not therefore be described.

After this period, the minting of Roman coins appears to have been confined to the capital, and the various cities of the continent. I know of no Roman coin, subsequent to the reign of the younger Constantine, which has any indication of

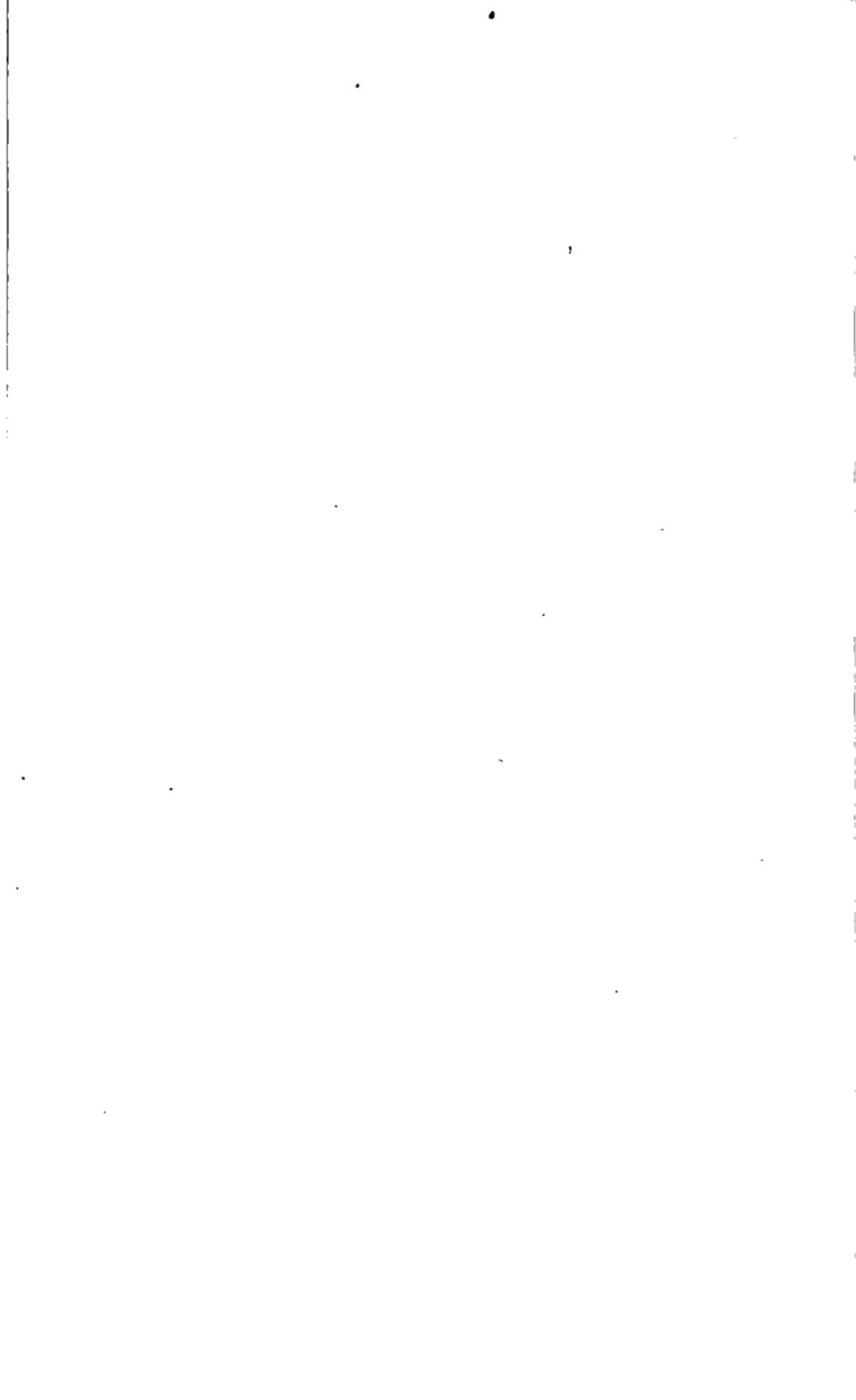
its having been struck in Britain; and it has been shewn that the Romans ceased to commemorate, on their coins, their deeds in this island after the reigns of Geta and Caracalla. Coins of the elder Constantine have reference to France and Germany; but none are known with any allusion to Britain.

Before concluding my remarks, I may advert to an opinion which has been strongly maintained by some antiquaries; namely, that many, if not all, of the Roman coins which bear records of victories obtained in Britain, were minted in the island. Nothing whatever can be advanced in support of such a conjecture. With the exception of the large brass of Britannicus (see p. 11), none of the large and middle brass, which have been described, are of colonial fabric, but, on the contrary, bear, in execution, a strong resemblance to those which, we have every reason to believe, were minted at Rome: it is on this account, perhaps, that they furnish us with so little information respecting the habits and appearances of our savage ancestors. Spain, Italy, Egypt, and other provinces, are characterised on the Roman coins by their peculiar attributes; but those which relate to Britain, merely denote her insular situation, or that the sea washed her shores. On coins of Antoninus Pius, Parthia is distinguished by the quiver of arrows, Africa by

the proboscis of the elephant; Cappadocia by mount Argæus; Spain, by her rabbit, &c.: but it would appear that the artists of the Roman mint took but little pains to obtain further information than that the shores of Britain were defended by rocks, and that the province was surrounded by the sea. Perhaps the senate considered that the representation of a naked and ill-armed barbarian, would convey but a mean idea of the power of the Roman arms, and therefore forbade a more characteristic representation of Britain.



## **ADDENDA.**



## ADDENDA.

*Page 45.*

### ROMAN CLAY MOULDS DISCOVERED IN ENGLAND.

THE following account, extracted from the fourteenth volume of the *Archæologia*, is well deserving the attention of the Antiquary.

“Having noticed, in Camden’s *Britannia*\*, an account of some clay moulds for fabricating Roman coins, found about the beginning of the last century at Edington, in the county of Somerset, and understanding, from persons in the neighbourhood, that they still continue to be discovered there, I was induced, some time since, to go thither with a party of friends; and we were fortunate enough to be directed to a spot, where, in less than an hour’s search, we picked up several hundred of them.

\* Gough’s *Camden*, vol. i. p. 71. A reference is made to Aubrey’s MSS, but I searched for it to no purpose, amongst his papers preserved at the museum at Oxford; as his MSS, however, are not arranged, I may have overlooked it.

“The field in which they were found, is a meadow that bears no marks of ever having been ploughed; which accounts for the moulds remaining so long undiscovered. It is situated at the north edge of Polden Hill, at about a quarter of a mile to the north of the village of Chilten. We were led to this particular spot, by a person who had some time before cut through a bed of them in digging a drain. They were lying promiscuously scattered over a space about four feet square, and from six inches to a foot below the surface of the ground.

“On carefully clearing away the earth which adhered to the moulds, we perceived that we had a much greater variety, as well as a larger number, than had been elsewhere discovered. Such moulds have been heretofore met with in small quantities at Ryton, in Shropshire\*, and at Lingivel in Yorkshire†, and great numbers of them at Lyons in France; but all these appear to have been of the Emperor Severus, Julia, his wife, or Antoninus, *i.e.* Caracalla, their son; whereas, in our collection, there are not only numerous impressions of these, but also of Geta, Macrinus, Elagabalus, Alexander Severus, Maximinus, Maximus, Plautilla, Julia Paula, and Julia Mamæa; besides a very considerable number of reverses. Most of these moulds are in such perfect preservation, as to admit of good casts being made of them in sulphur, coloured with vermillion, some of which, together with a few of the moulds themselves, I now send for your satisfaction, and that of the Antiquarian

\* Phil. Trans. Vol. xliv. page 557.

† Phil. Trans. Vol. xxiv. page 2139.

Society, if you should think this letter worth communicating.

“In the accounts that have been published respecting them, in England, there is very little more than the bare mention of their discovery, and of the use to which they were applied; but in the “*Histoire de l'Academie des Inscriptions*,” tom. iii. p. 218, there is a very well written paper on the subject, entitled, “*Observations sur l'Usage de quelque Moules Antiques de Monnoies Romaines, decouverts à Lyons*,” the principal part of which I insert in the note appended to this article, as being extremely curious in itself, and not accessible to every lover of antiquity: contenting myself, to avoid repetition, with briefly observing, that the object of the paper is to shew, that these moulds were the instruments of illegal coiners, which supposition is rendered very probable by the argument there adduced, and is still further confirmed by the following circumstances attending this last discovery of moulds at Edington.

“Though we have frequent instances, as in the moulds at Lyons, of a head on one side, and on the other a reverse, yet it often happens that there are reverses on both sides, and these entirely different from each other; which, as both impressions must have been made at the same instant, whilst the clay was moist, can only be accounted for on the supposition that the coins of several emperors were fabricated at one and the same time, and this, it is evident, could only take place in the hands of illegal coiners.

“The discovery of the wedge of base metal, found

together with the moulds at Lyons, affords certainly a strong presumption that they were designed for the fabrication of base coins; but it is no more than a presumption: that such, however, was the use made of these which are in our possession, cannot well be doubted, since we not only found, as at Lyons, a lump of metal, but likewise in one instance, the very coin itself, lodged in its mould, and formed like the lump of a white metal resembling silver, but which, upon examination, proves to be principally tin.

“The nature of these moulds, and the unlawful purpose to which they were applied, being thus ascertained, it is natural to enquire whether we are likely to derive any useful knowledge from the great variety of figures and inscriptions found upon them? To this I am reluctantly obliged to answer, that, in my opinion, we are not. The reverses of coins have frequently been of the greatest service, by illustrating doubtful points of history, and even by bringing to light circumstances and events unknown to us before; but I do not see how the reverses on moulds ever can be made this use of, since it does not apply, with certainty, any given reverse to its proper front, unless it should happen that we are authorised by the coin itself; in which case the additional testimony of the mould is not wanted. This consideration has deterred me from troubling you with the legends, or any particular description of the fronts and reverses. I cannot, however, help mentioning my hope that, though of great use in elucidating general history, these moulds, found at, and near Edington, in such vast

quantities, and in such various places, may possibly hereafter contribute towards clearing up the ancient topography of that particular neighbourhood."

## NOTE.

(Translation.)

"The substance of these moulds is a baked white clay. Their shape is flat and terminated by a circumference an inch in breadth. Their thickness is two lines\* at the edges, and within this space it is diminished, on one or both sides of the mould, by the depth of the coin, the type of which is there impressed. We say on one or both sides of the mould, because the greater number have, on one side, the impression of a head, and on the other that of a reverse, while some of them are impressed on one side only. Each mould has a notch or indentation on one part of its edge, which reaches to the vacant space formed by the body of the impressed coin; and as the flat shape and equality of the circumference of all the moulds adapts them for joining together in such a relative arrangement as to bring the types of heads opposite to those of the reverses, of which an impression is preserved, and in a position where all the notches meet each other, it is at once apparent, that the furrow made by these indentations serves as a jet or casting-hole to the group, or rouleau, formed by the junction of moulds, for casting the metal intended for the coins.

"An ingot of debased silver, found at the same time and place as these moulds, the green rust of which indicated the large proportion of copper intermixed with it, leaves no room to doubt that they had been used for casting silver rather than gold money. It appears from this description, and from the use the ancients made of these moulds, that their mode of making casts was very much like ours: but what is peculiarly worthy of notice is the quality of earth they employed, which was so excellent, and so well prepared, that after 1400 years, their moulds are perfect enough to receive several castings."

After producing many arguments to prove that the only

\* The French line is about the tenth of an inch.

legal method of coining among the Romans, was with the hammer, the author asks;— “What can we suppose these moulds to be, if they were not used by those forgers who superadded debasement of the standard to counterfeit casting, by largely increasing the proportion of alloy?—as is evident from the quality of the ingot discovered at the same time, which coincides with the system of forgery alluded to in the Theodosian code, in the following terms: — ‘*Si quis nummum falsā fusione formaverit, universas ejus facultates fisco addici præcipimus, ut in monetis tantum nostris cudendæ pecuniæ studium frequentetur.*—If any one shall fabricate coin by false casting, we command all his property to be given up to the treasury, in order that the business of coining money may be carried on only in our own mints.’

“Hence arises that remarkable difference of value which is often observed in many coins of the same reverse, of the same epoch, and under the same emperor. This way of counterfeiting money was more general than that of plating, from the time of Pliny, who remarks, that it was practised with such dexterity, that it was so difficult to distinguish a piece of money which had been coined from one cast in sand by a skilful forger, that this knowledge had become a particular art, and that some of these pieces were so well fabricated, that the curious often gave many good coins to get possession of a false one. The decline of the art of engraving, which, under Septimius Severus, was already very considerable, and the alteration which he had introduced in the standard of money, were more and more favourable to forgers and false coiners, by rendering their deceptions more easy; so that the number of the moulds which have been discovered at Lyons, at different periods, leads us to think that these false coiners must have existed in great numbers. Indeed, at length they became so numerous, even in the cities where there were prefects of the mint, and among the officers and workmen employed therein, that they were able to form, at Rome, under the Emperor Aurelius, a little army, who, for fear of the punishment with which they were threatened, revolted against him, and killed, at the first onset, 7000 of the regular troops.”

A FRIEND observes, that I might have ventured on a few remarks on the coins of *Clodius Albinus*, which bear the title of *Cæsar*, and which he is of opinion were minted in Britain. I, however, think otherwise, and that the coins of Albinus were struck at Rome and forwarded to the province. My reason for this conjecture is, that those pieces which bear the title of *Augustus* (which, it appears, was not assumed until after the open rupture with Severus), are of a fabric entirely different from those on which he is styled *Cæsar*, are of extremely barbarous execution, and vary considerably in weight; circumstances which seem to shew that Albinus had not the means of good coinage within his reach. Within these few years past, deposits of coins of Albinus, with the title of *Augustus*, have been discovered in France, in which country they were, in all probability, minted, previous to the fatal battle with his rival, Severus; and these partake of that rude character to which I have alluded. Notwithstanding these facts, we cannot be certain that *dies* for the coins of Albinus were not forwarded to Britain, and used in mints established here.

*Page 20.*

THE sale of Mr. Edgar's coins, to which allusion is made in page 20, was, I am informed, *sui generis*; several gentlemen having resolved that the collection should bring the highest possible sum; and the prices of many of the coins were consequently doubled by competition. I mention this, in order to shew that quotations of the prices of coins, sold at public sales, can seldom guide either the seller or purchaser.

*Page 41.*

ON a silver coin of Caracalla, in the cabinet of Mr. Brumell, Victory, instead of a standard, holds a *trophy* in both hands: in other respects the type resembles that described at page 40.

*Page 56.*

IN the time of Carausius, the city styled Caerleon was known only as *Isca Silurum*; the C in the exergue must therefore refer to some other place (if it denotes a place of mintage). A friend conjectures that it may be *Camulodunum*.

*Page 57.*

THE gold coin of Carausius in the British Museum was purchased of Mr. Thane for £120, not £150.

*Ibid.*

THIS coin, though unique, differs but little from that described in Lord Oxford's sale catalogue. The figure of Peace is there given as holding the hasta, not transversely, but erect: the legend and type are, in every other respect, the same as that described at page 57. A marginal manuscript note in the catalogue, states that it was purchased by Martin Folkes for the Earl of Pembroke, for 63*l.* 10*s.*; but in the catalogue of that nobleman's collection, published in 1746, it is not described, although purchased for him four years previously. Was it subsequently discovered to be a *cast* from the common brass coin of Allectus with that type?

Banduri (*Numismata Imperatorum Romanorum*, tom. ii. p. 19), gives, from Foucault, a coin of Diocletian, in second brass, bearing the very common type:—Genius standing, holding a patera over an altar, with the legend GENIO · POPVLI · ROMANI, but with the letters LON in the exergue. The learning and research of that most laborious writer, are beyond all praise; but unfortunately he has fallen into an error not uncommon among writers of his day, namely, that of sometimes giving false or unauthenticated coins; and such may be the case with regard to the example here quoted: nevertheless, I have thought proper to notice it, as there is nothing but its being absent in the English cabinets I have looked over, to warrant its being pronounced doubtful. It may be that some ingenious forger had taken this very common type of Diocletian, and substituted LON for other letters frequently found on the exergue of the coins of that emperor.

It is singular, that we have no coins of Constantius Chlorus with P · LON although he resided in England for some time, and died at Eboracum (York).\* This fact seems to throw some doubt on the coin of Diocletian given by Banduri.

\* While this sheet was in the press, accounts appeared in the provincial journals, of the discovery of Roman remains at York. Sepulchral tablets, inscriptions recording the names of the Roman legions, and numerous coins have been the result of recent excavations; and yet we seldom or ever obtain an intelligible account of the last mentioned relics, although they may, in many instances, assist in establishing the date of the inscriptions found with them. Our provincial antiquaries are delighted if they meet with a few fragments of a broken tablet, of the letters of which

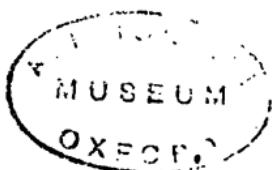
The same author (tom. ii. p. 113) also quotes small brass coins of Helena, the wife of Constantius Chlorus, and mother of Constantine the Great, with the letters P · LON in the exergue. The type, which is very common with other letters in the exergue, is thus described by Banduri.

*Obverse.* FL · HELENA · AVGVSTA. *Flavia Helena Augusta.* Bust of the empress, with a diadem, to the right.

*Reverse.* SECVRITAS · REPVBLICAE. A female figure clad in the stola and peplum, standing, holding in her right hand a branch: in the exergue P · LON.

they hasten to give an interpretation, while the coins, *with their legends and devices entire*, are slightly noticed, or are so unintelligibly described, as to be of no service to those who are engaged in the study of our antiquities.

THE END.





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Drawn & Engd by Henry A. 1836

London. Published by Wm. H. Wilson. Jan<sup>st</sup>. Feb<sup>nd</sup> 1836.



PLATE III.



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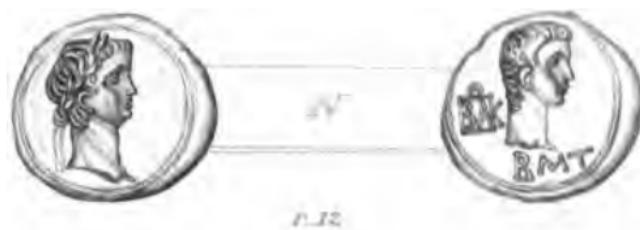


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PL. 22.



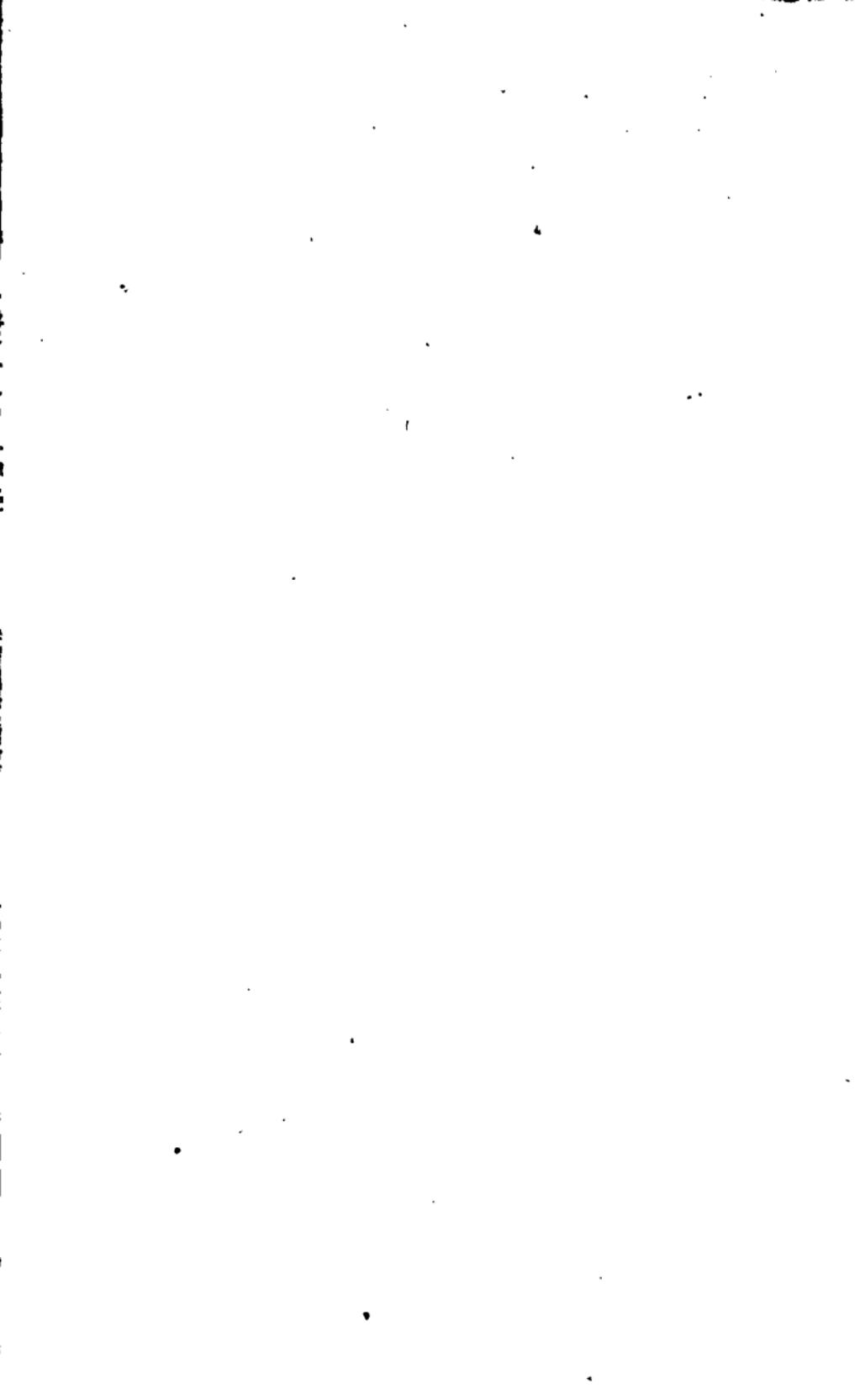




PLATE III.



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PLATE IV.



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PLATE V.



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